



# Property Tax Assessment Freeze

## Instructions for Completing the Application

### Introduction

The Illinois Revenue Act ([35 ILCS 200/Art. 10 Div. 4](#)) provides an owner-occupant with an eight-year freeze on the assessed value of his or her historic principal residence if a rehabilitation project meets the four provisions [described on our website](#). After the eight-year freeze period, the assessment will step up until the 12<sup>th</sup> year, when it will be at its then-current level. When all three parts of this Application are approved by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in the Department of Natural Resources, the SHPO will issue a Certificate of Rehabilitation, which allows an assessor to implement the assessment freeze for the property.

These instructions will help you complete the program Application, each part of which is downloadable from [our website](#). If you have any questions, please contact the SHPO at 217-524-0276 or [consult our website](#), where all parts of the Application are available for download. **Every project must submit completed hardcopies of each of the three parts of the Application.** The three parts (and their respective supporting documents) may be submitted separately. The Application must be mailed to:

State Historic Preservation Office  
Tax Incentives  
Illinois Department of Natural Resources  
1 Old State Capitol Plaza  
Springfield, IL 62701.

Digital submissions are not accepted at this time. Each item below corresponds to a section within each of the three parts of the Application.

### **PART 1: [Certification of a Historic Building](#)**

It is highly recommended that you submit Parts 1 and 2 prior to construction.

- 1. Property information:** Enter the property's historic name (if it has one) and mailing address. Check the appropriate box for the property's type of historic designation. For local landmarks, you must attach a copy of the local designation ordinance or a printout of your municipality's webpage showing the landmarked property. For contributing buildings in historic districts, you must enter the name of the historic district and attach a map showing the boundaries of the historic district with the property identified. If your property is in the process of being listed locally or to the National Register, please attach a description of where the property is in the designation process.
- 2. Project contact (if different from Owner):** Complete this section if the application has been filled out by someone other than the property owner.
- 3. Statement of significance (maximum of 50 words):** If your building is in a local or National Register historic district, describe in fewer than 50 words how it contributes to the district's significance. For example, how does it compare to surrounding properties in terms of age, architectural style or significance, and/or materials? Is it associated with significant people or a historic event? If known, list the date of construction, original owner, and architect.
- 4. Owner:** List the contact information of the current owner. We require the owner's original signature.
- 5. Materials that must be submitted with this completed and signed form:**
  - A. Recently taken color photographs showing exterior views of the property:** Include clear,

high-resolution images of the front and sides of the building printed on glossy paper. Label each photo with the property's address and briefly describe what is shown (i.e., "Colonel Thompson House, 503 W. Main, north elevation"). The Part 2 requires additional detailed and complete pre-construction photos of the inside and outside of the property.

- B. Proof of historic status for properties in districts and for pending designations:** As stated in #1 above, for local landmarks, you must attach a copy of the local designation ordinance or a printout of your municipality's webpage showing the landmarked property. For contributing buildings in historic districts, you must attach a map showing the boundaries of the historic district with the property identified. For properties in the process of being designated, attach a description of where the property is in the designation process.

## **PART 2: [Request for Approval of a Rehabilitation Plan](#)**

In the Part 2, you thoroughly describe your rehabilitation project. **It is strongly recommended that the SHPO approves your Part 2 before you start any construction.** Work that occurs prior to SHPO approval is at your own risk. If you have questions when filling out the Part 2, please call the SHPO's Tax Incentives Manager at 217-524-0276. Insufficient documentation may delay our review.

1. **Property information:** This should be the same as on the Part 1.
2. **Project data:**
  - **Estimated start date** and **Estimated completion date** let the SHPO reviewers know how far along your project might be in design or construction. Projects already under way or completed prior to the approval of the Part 2 are still eligible to apply, although all work must meet the Standards.
  - **Estimated rehab cost** is an approximation of the budget and may differ from the Part 3 cost.
  - **Floor area before/after rehab** can be an estimate.
  - **Architect/Designer for project (if applicable):** If a design professional was involved, his or her contact information must be provided. It is not required that projects have a design professional.
3. **Project contact (if different from Owner):** Complete this section if the application has been filled out by someone other than the property owner.
4. **Owner:** List the contact information of the current owner. We require the owner's original signature.
5. **Description of the Rehabilitation Plan:** Using as many sheets as you require, describe all parts of the project, both exterior and interior, even if the work is an ineligible expense, such as site work or new construction. Use a new numbered item for each project component, such as a specific architectural feature or a space, like the staircase, wood floors, roofing, windows, or the front parlor. Describe and approximately date the feature or space (example: "foyer, original feature, c. 1894; low bookshelf from 1980s"). Reference the appropriate photographs and drawings (if available). Explain the proposed work (example: "wood trim in foyer to be chemically stripped of paint. Then the woodwork will be stained and varnished. The 1980s bookshelf will be removed, and the missing baseboard behind it will be replaced with new, matching rood baseboard."). [Additional description sheets are available on our website.](#)
6. **Materials that must be submitted with this completed and signed form:**
  - A. **Completed "Description of Rehabilitation Plan" sheets:** See number 5 above.
  - B. **Labeled, exterior pre-construction photographs printed on glossy paper:** Color photos must be taken prior to construction with either a film or digital camera. Digital photos must be printed at a very high resolution at least 4" x 6" in size on glossy photo paper. Number and label each photo with the property address, description, and date taken (i.e., "Photo #2, 123 Elm, front facade, pre-rehab"). Exterior photos must include every façade, both close up and at a distance so that roof lines and chimneys are visible. Include views from the corners of the lots, if

possible. Interior photos should be similar to a “walk-through” and must include the all the rooms in the building, even those where work will not occur. Photos of major spaces (such as vestibule, foyer, stair hall, stairs, living and dining rooms, main hallways) should provide more detail. Include overall views and details of distinctive elements, such as fireplaces, historic light fixtures, original doors, stained-glass windows, plaster details, molding, historic flooring, and railings. It is helpful to stand in opposite corners and shoot whole rooms diagonally. Include images of problems, such as previously repaired or missing elements, damaged areas, and additions. If any part of the project is underway or completed, include both “before” and “during/after” photos. Include historic photos, if available.

- C. Architectural or design plans, if prepared**, should be printed at a readable size and submitted with your Part 2.

## **PART 3: Request for Approval of Completed Work**

Unlike Parts 1 and 2, Part 3 should be completed and submitted when construction is finished. The SHPO bases its approval on the description in this Application. In the event of a discrepancy between the Application and other supplementary material (such as architectural plans or specifications), the Application takes precedence.

### **1. Property information**

#### **2. Project data:**

- A. Property Index Number (PIN) or legal description:** Your PIN is available from your assessor or may be found on your property tax bill.
- B. Assessor’s Fair Market Value for the year the rehab began:** This number, also called Fair Cash Value, is determined by your assessor and appears on your property tax bill. Your minimum expenditure is 25% of this value for the year you began your project. For instance, if your assessor’s Fair Market Value is \$290,850 when you started your project, then your project must cost more than \$72,712.50 ( $\frac{1}{4}$  of \$290,850) to trigger the freeze.
- C. Assessed Value for the year the work began:** The Assessed Value, always substantially less than the Fair Market Value, is determined by the assessor and appears on your tax bill.
- D. Total of Eligible Expenses (Rehab costs for existing building):** Only the money you spend on the existing structure can be counted towards meeting your minimum expenditure.
- E. Total of Ineligible Expenses (Costs for additions, site work, etc.):** Adding D (Eligible Expenses) to E (Ineligible Expenses) should result in the full project budget.
- F. Project starting date** to the nearest month (i.e., “June, 2008”).
- G. Project completion date:** Not the estimate provided in Part 2, but the actual end date.
- H. Total number of housing units before/after rehabilitation:** Single-family houses have 1. If the property did not contain any residences (i.e., an adaptive reuse of a warehouse), the “before” number is 0. If you began with a building with 15 apartments (even if some were unoccupied) and ended with 12 condo units, then you enter 15/12.
- 3. Project contact (if different from Owner):** Complete this section if the application has been filled out by someone other than the property owner.
- 4. Owner:** By signing this Part 3 form, you certify that the information is correct, that you own and occupy the residence as your principal residence; that you are the first occupant after this rehab, and that no Certificate of Rehabilitation has been issued for this same residence within 4 years of the adjustment valuation period. The form must have the owner’s original signature.
- 5. Materials that must be submitted with this completed and signed form**
- A. Labeled exterior and interior post-construction photographs:** Exterior and interior photos

must be printed in color at a high resolution at least 4" x 6" in size on glossy paper. They should be numbered, labeled, and dated (example: "Photo #19, foyer, 9/7/18 after rehab"). Views of the completed work should approximate the views in the photos submitted with the Part 2.

- B. Summary of eligible expenditures:** Using [the form that is downloadable from our website](#) or your own spreadsheet, summarize the eligible rehab expenses.
- C. Copies of proof of expenditure:** Photocopies of proof of expenditure must be submitted to substantiate the costs of your rehabilitation project. Include canceled checks, paid invoices, and/or credit-card statements with unrelated and sensitive information redacted. If you are including "sweat equity" in your totals, include a completed [Do-It-Yourself Labor Report, which is downloadable from our website.](#)
- D. Copy of property tax bill from the year work began**